



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 6
1445 ROSS AVENUE, SUITE 1200
DALLAS TX 75202-2733

February 1, 2018

Ms. Candace Head-Dylla
Bluewater Downstream Alliance
Post Office Box 2038
Milan, New Mexico 87020

Dear Ms. Head-Dylla:

Thank you for your December 4, 2017, letter to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and other federal agencies regarding the Homestake Mining Company Superfund site in Cibola County, New Mexico. You asked for EPA to compel Homestake to provide compensation to the communities in the form of new wells, repayment for municipal water fees, and/or buyout of residences. EPA is committed to removing threats to human health and the environment as quickly as possible with community engagement and involvement in decision making. However, the EPA does not have the authority to provide financial compensation for economic losses associated with Superfund sites nor the ability to compel responsible parties to compensate community members for damages.

We agree that dealing with the legacy of uranium mining presents significant challenges for EPA, the other federal agencies, the State, and the affected communities. We are in the midst of studies to ascertain background groundwater contamination around the Homestake site and will seek community comment on draft findings before drawing conclusions. We are also examining the broader problem caused by billions of gallons of contaminated water discharged from uranium mines into groundwater and will seek public input on how to deal with that legacy problem.

Should you wish to discuss this response, please contact me at (214) 665-6701 or Sai Appaji, EPA's project manager for the Homestake Site, at (214) 665-3126.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Edlund", is written over a horizontal line.

Carl E. Edlund P.E.

Director

Superfund Division

Cc:
Sarah Fields, Program Director
Uranium Watch

Rev. Larry Bernard, O.F.M., Pastor
San Diego Mission

Linda Evers
Post '71 Workers Committee

Laguna Acoma Coalition for a Safe Environment
Puebla of Acoma

Buffalo Bruce
Western Nebraska Resources Council

Rita Capitan, Larry King
Eastern Navajo Dine' Against Uranium Mining

Susan Gordon
Multicultural Alliance for a Safe Environment

Hon. Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

Hon. Tom Udall
United States Senator

Hon. Steve Pearce
United States Representative

Hon. George Munoz
New Mexico State Senator

Hon. Lee Alcon
New Mexico State Senator

James D. Tierney
United States Attorney for the District of New Mexico

Virginia Grebasch
U.S. Department of Energy Inspector General

Tania Smith Taylor
Director of Legacy Management, U.S. D.O.E.

Kristine L. Svinicki, Chairman
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission